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SUBJECT: SYG BAN PROPOSES RESTRUCTURING OF DPKO

Classified By: Ambassador Alejandro D. Wolff, Charge d'Affaires,  
for reasons 1.4 b,d.

Summary and Comment

11. (U) Secretary-General Ban has proposed restructuring the Secretariat to downgrade the Department of Disarmament

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Affairs (DDA) and split the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) into two distinct departments. Ban has asked the GA to give its blessing to the proposals, which he would then proceed to implement immediately. (In part, because Ban would like to carry out the restructuring before naming his senior leadership team.) Under his proposal, the budget and administrative actions necessary to formalize the restructuring would proceed through the normal procedures of the Fifth Committee later this year. USUN has emailed Ban's non-paper to the Department.

12. (C) The President of the General Assembly convened a small group of Perm Reps, including Ambassador Wolff, on Monday morning, January 29, to discuss the SYG's proposals. NAM/G-77 delegations are unhappy with both the process that Ban is pursuing and the substance of his proposals. EU and other Western delegations share some of these concerns, grumbling that they do not understand the urgency or logic behind his ideas. Press attention here is focused on opposition to Ban's proposal. Ban, who is out of town as this develops, faces a significant challenge to win support for his proposal and an early test of his leadership.

13. (C) We believe it is difficult to assess, with any real certainty, the real world impact of the restructuring on the work of the two departments. Beyond our own views of the proposed reforms, we need to ensure that Ban does not come away from his first confrontation with the general membership with an understanding that he is beholden to the NAM/G-77 to get things done in the building (or worse, that it is too hard to get anything done and so there is no point in trying). While supporting the SYG, however, we should be careful that our support for his plan does not bolster conspiracy theorists who are already seeing a "U.S. hand" behind Ban's restructuring effort. End Summary and Comment.

14. (U) Secretary-General Ban originally asked President of the General Assembly (GA) Khalifa to convene a meeting of the GA on February 5 in order to pass a resolution that would give political support to the SYG's proposal to restructure the Secretariat. Ban has proposed two main reforms: 1) downgrading the Department of Disarmament Affairs (DDA), which would then be led by an SRSG instead of an Under Secretary-General, and 2) splitting DPKO into two

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Departments, one for operations and one for logistics, (each of which would be headed by an U/SYG). In the face of widespread criticism of the proposals, the SYG's spokesman

announced on January 30 that he will delay his request for action past February 5, in order to allow time for consultations with Member States.

Downgrade DDA  
(after the NAM rejects the first idea)  
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¶15. (U) Ban has proposed downgrading the Department of Disarmament Affairs (DDA) and reconstituting it as a separate office under his direct supervision. Instead of being led at the U/SYG level, the new office will be run by an SRSG for Disarmament Affairs. The office will "promote and support multilateral efforts on disarmament and nonproliferation of weapons and mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, pursuant to maintenance of international peace and security as well as global efforts to combat terrorism."

¶16. (U) This proposal replaces the previously mooted idea to incorporate DDA under the Department of Political Affairs. The proposal to merge DDA into DPA was strongly opposed by the NAM, with whom the SYG's Chef du Cabinet, Vijay Nambiar, has been negotiating over the past couple of weeks.

Splitting DPKO in two  
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¶17. (U) In addition, Ban proposes to split DPKO into two departments: a Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and a Department of Field Support (DFS); each to be headed by an Under Secretary-General.

¶18. (U) The DPO will plan, direct, manage, and provide political guidance to all field operations currently under DPKO. The DPO will coordinate all the different components of mission planning including: policy, support, military, police, and civilian elements. It will also serve as an identifiable and accountable interlocutor for Member States, UN, and non-UN partners. It will also manage the

Secretariat's interaction with troop and police contributing

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countries and reporting to the Security Council as well as to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping.

¶19. (U) The DFS will be responsible for providing support to UN field operations, including personnel, finance, procurement, logistics, communications, information technology and other administrative and general management issues. To ensure efficiency, coherence, and oversight of this new Department, existing headquarters related to field operations will be consolidated as needed.

¶10. (U) Ban claims that this restructuring will enhance the speed, efficiency, management, and oversight of support and/or peacekeeping resources. Unity of command will be maintained through the SRSG in field missions who will report to the SYG through the DPO. The primary responsibility for all peacekeeping decisions will rest with the Under Secretary-General for DPO. Under this proposal, DFS will

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report to and receive direction from DPO on issues related to UN peacekeeping; however, with respect to administrative and management issues, the DFS will receive direction from and report to the Deputy Secretary-General.

Lukewarm Reaction:  
On both process and substance  
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¶11. (C) The Secretary-General appears to have gotten a very lukewarm response to his proposals, which has not been helped by the fact that the ideas are being advanced while the SYG is on his first overseas trip. In a meeting with GA President Khalifa on January 29, the NAM and G-77 expressed concern at the apparent effort to diminish the importance of

the UN's disarmament body. They have, similarly, told Khalifa that the Secretary-General's proposals on restructuring DPKO are "not convincing." South African Permanent Representative Kumalo is quoted in the press as openly questioning the "downgrading" of DDA "because disarmament is very important to us." Kumalo went on to allow that we should let Ban come back and explain himself since he's "only been in the job for a month."

¶12. (C) A Pakistani delegate told USUN that they do not understand why the SYG has made this his first priority when there are "hundreds of other things" to be done. A CANZ colleague said that Ban's proposal had "raised eyebrows" in her mission as people tried to understand the logic behind the DPKO proposal. One of Khalifa's advisors said that the Secretary-General has "trapped" himself by linking the

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restructuring to the appointment of his senior team, including all of the U/SYG's. The NAM and G-77 may demand that Ban submit the DPKO restructuring proposal to the GA's Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. They are also very reluctant to agree to a General Assembly resolution that would give the SYG approval to restructure the Secretariat, without first working the proposal through the Fifth Committee process. Both of these procedural hurdles would give the NAM/G-77 more bureaucratic leverage over the proposed changes.

¶13. (C) The Europeans, too, are unhappy with the proposals, and in particular that the SYG has begun his term by negotiating almost exclusively with the NAM and G-77 and not more broadly with the membership. They are concerned about the breakup of DPKO, which has recently been a European-led Department, particularly in light of press reports that the SYG is considering an American to head the Department of Political Affairs and a Japanese to head the new Department of Field Support.

Next steps  
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¶14. (U) Khalifa has committed to reporting delegations' reactions back to the Secretary-General following her January 29 meeting with PRs. In addition to Ambassador Wolff, the meeting included the PRs of Cuba (for the NAM), Pakistan (for the G-77), Russia, China, Germany (for the EU), Canada, New Zealand, Mexico and Nigeria (for the African Group). Neither the UK nor France were invited; NAM and G-77 reps were each invited as there are "both administrative and political aspects" to Ban's proposals.

¶15. (C) As a result of the criticism received, the SYG's office announced on January 30 that GA action to "approve" the restructuring will be delayed past February 5. This gives Ban time to argue his case personally on his return to New York. He now has a significant hurdle to win support for his proposal in what has turned into an early test of his leadership. In addition, because he has not yet appointed his senior management team, Ban has a thin stable of people to argue the case on his behalf in UN corridors.

WOLFF